

INTERVIEWING, SELECTION AND HIRING

DID YOU KNOW?

Below are examples from the research that show impacts of identity characteristics on an individual's interview, selection or hiring. In the cited references:

- Members of minority groups applying to the public service reportedly face various barriers in the recruitment process (e.g., conscious or unconscious bias on the part of hiring managers);¹
- Unconscious biases have been found to affect the judgment of individuals responsible for recruitment, evaluation and selection processes² (see the [Unconscious Bias White Paper](#) for more information);
- Intersectionality, which refers to the intersection of designated groups, has been generally observed to lead to more discrimination. For example, when someone with a disability is from an Indigenous, ethnic or visible minority community, they may be more likely to be doubly discriminated against³ (see the [Understanding Intersectionality White Paper](#) for more information);
- The testing method (submitting pairs of identical fictitious resumes with different names) shows that a foreign-sounding name can limit the chances of being called for an interview;^{4,5}
- Women have been observed to be interrupted more often than men during interviews;⁶
- Women have been found to convey less authority in interviews, in particular through their body language. This difference is likely not to their advantage, especially if they are seeking an executive or senior management position;^{7,8}



- A person's tone of voice has been found to influence how others perceive their leadership. People with deep voices may be viewed as more capable of taking on leadership roles, which may put women at a disadvantage;⁹
- Women have been found to be more humble when it comes to taking credit for a task.¹⁵ This may also be the case of members of Eastern cultures in which individuals may tend not to take credit for success, compared to Western cultures;¹⁰
- Persons with disabilities may be disadvantaged by a selection process that is not adapted to their particular condition (e.g., reduced mobility);⁵
- Cultural differences between the candidate and the interviewer can influence the latter's judgment when evaluating the application;¹¹
- The sum of individual intelligences has been found not to predict the intelligence of a group. Collective intelligence is understood to have a relational and interactive component, so that it cannot be boiled down to the sum of its parts.¹²



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following examples of interviewing, selection or hiring processes are provided for inspiration.

1

Preparing the committee and developing the hiring process

- Broaden the pool of potential candidates and seek out diverse candidates from designated and marginalized groups^{2,13,14} (see the [posting design and advertisement pamphlet](#) for more information);
- Make sure that each part of the process is accessible¹⁵ (e.g., for candidates with disabilities);
- Learn about the advantages and potential challenges of diversity in higher education and research (see the [documentation available online](#) for more information);^{CWSE}
- Make sure that the hiring committee is diverse and aware of EDI;¹⁵
- Increase accountability and transparency for each step in the hiring process¹ (e.g., make the hiring committee accountable by asking them to justify why a person belonging to a minority group was not selected for the position);¹⁵
- Standardize the evaluation process in an equitable way.¹⁵

2

Preparing and conducting an inclusive and equitable interview

- Identify and rank the evaluation criteria before reviewing applications;¹²
- Use a structured interview;³
- Avoid criteria or questions that could be discriminatory regarding subjects protected by the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* (e.g., about age or disability);²
- Include interview questions related to inclusion (e.g., ask the candidate to describe a situation in which they defended respect, equity, diversity and inclusion in their job);¹⁶
- Inform the interviewee that their evaluation will not be negatively affected by a past interruption of employment for medical, family or community-related reasons.¹⁵

3

Application review and final selection

- Identify prejudices, stereotypes and microaggressions in hiring committee deliberations and discuss with each member to help them break free of these elements;¹⁵
- Look beyond the traditional excellence and merit criteria (e.g., number of publications, amounts of grants obtained^{CWSE}) to consider non-linear pathways¹⁷ and First Nations knowledge systems;¹⁸
- Take into account the particular circumstances of each individual to ensure that the evaluation is equitable (e.g., regarding the applicant's vision of their integration into the department and the faculty, an external candidate must be evaluated equitably with respect to an internal candidate, as they have a different knowledge of this environment);^{CWSE}
- Take into account cultural and individual differences (e.g., gender differences in self-presentation and communication style)^{7,15} in order to promote "fair and equitable treatment" of all candidates;¹⁵
- Take into account that the best-qualified candidates are not automatically those with the most years of experience¹⁵ (e.g., regarding their vision of integration into the department and the faculty, an external candidate must be evaluated equitably with respect to an internal one, as they have a different knowledge of this environment);^{CWSE}
- Base the evaluation on the application package of the candidate and not just on their performance in the interview (e.g., men often distinguish themselves more than women in interviews, but are not necessarily always the best qualified for the position);⁷
- Avoid stereotypes and giving greater importance to traditionally male personal characteristics such as "enterprising," "competitive" or "ambitious";¹⁵
- Write a report to be reviewed by an EDI specialist justifying why a person from a designated group was not selected.¹⁵

RESOURCES

Intersectionality White Paper.

<http://cfsg.espaceweb.usherbrooke.ca/download/4696/>

Documentation on the potential benefits and challenges of diversity in higher education and research.

<http://cfsg.espaceweb.usherbrooke.ca/edi-in-higher-education-and-research/>

Pamphlets on EDI in research: Job posting design and advertising; Unconscious bias.

<http://cfsg.espaceweb.usherbrooke.ca/resources-for-implementing-edi-in-research/>

Guide for university hiring committees: Searching for excellence and diversity.

https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf

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- ^{CWSE} Chair for Women in Science and Engineering in Quebec



ABOUT THE NSERC CHAIR FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING IN QUEBEC

The mission of the Chair for Women in Science and Engineering (CWSE) in Quebec is to increase the representation of women and maintain their participation in the field of science and engineering (SE). The Chair's first action area is to work with girls and the people close to them to present and demystify the opportunities that SE has to offer. The Chair also works with students and professionals to better equip them to overcome the obstacles that continue to affect their careers. Moreover, the Chair works with several communities to rally efforts around the equity, diversity and inclusion in higher education and research. The Chair's second action area is to conduct research to understand and raise awareness of this issue. In this way, it helps propose potential solutions to the various authorities involved, with a view to driving change.



ABOUT UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE

In its 2018–2022 strategic plan, Université de Sherbrooke committed to becoming an exemplary environment with respect to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). This commitment has resulted in the adoption of a related action plan, which is under the direct responsibility of the rector. Implementation of this plan is supported by the Executive Committee, the EDI Strategic Committee and all its working committees, and by several influential members of our community. The university is proud to be able to count on the leadership of the Chair for Women in Science and Engineering, which is contributing to this objective by developing a series of EDI-related training and tools, thereby strengthening our academic community.

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